



Security Council

Seventy-first year

Provisional

7689th meeting

Friday, 6 May 2016, 10 a.m.
New York

President: Mr. Aboulatta (Egypt)

<i>Members:</i>	Angola	Mr. Lucas
	China	Mr. Shen Bo
	France	Mrs. Audouard
	Japan	Mr. Yoshikawa
	Malaysia	Mrs. Adnin
	New Zealand	Mr. Van Bohemen
	Russian Federation	Mr. Churkin
	Senegal	Mr. Ciss
	Spain	Mr. Oyarzun Marachesi
	Ukraine	Mr. Yelchenko
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland ..	Mr. Hickey
	United States of America	Ms. Sison
	Uruguay	Mr. Bermúdez
	Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)	Mr. Suárez Moreno

Agenda

The situation concerning Iraq

Tenth report of the Secretary-General pursuant to paragraph 4 of Security Council resolution 2107 (2013) (S/2016/372)

Third report of the Secretary-General pursuant to paragraph 7 of resolution 2233 (2015) (S/2016/396)

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the translation of speeches delivered in other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room U-0506 (verbatimrecords@un.org). Corrected records will be reissued electronically on the Official Document System of the United Nations (<http://documents.un.org>).

16-12919 (E)



Accessible document

Please recycle



The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation concerning Iraq

Tenth report of the Secretary-General pursuant to paragraph 4 of Security Council resolution 2107 (2013) (S/2016/372)

Third report of the Secretary-General pursuant to paragraph 7 of resolution 2233 (2015) (S/2016/396)

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): In accordance with rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representative of Iraq to participate in this meeting.

In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite Mr. Ján Kubiš, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq, to participate in this meeting.

On behalf of the Council, I welcome Mr. Kubiš, who is joining today's meeting via video teleconference from Baghdad.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

I wish to draw the attention of Council members to document S/2016/372, which contains the tenth report of the Secretary-General pursuant to paragraph 4 of Security Council resolution 2107 (2013), as well as to document S/2016/396, which contains the third report of the Secretary-General pursuant to paragraph 7 of resolution 2233 (2015).

I now give the floor to Mr. Kubiš.

Mr. Kubiš: I have the honour to present the third report S/2016/396 of the Secretary-General pursuant to paragraph 7 of resolution 2233 (2015), as well as the tenth report (S/2016/372) of the Secretary-General pursuant to paragraph 4 of resolution 2107 (2013), on the issue of missing Kuwaiti and third-country nationals, and property.

Since my previous briefing to the Security Council (see S/PV.7623), a profound political crisis has engulfed Baghdad and the country and brought paralysis and deadlock to the work of the Government and the Council

of Representatives. The failure of Iraq's Government and political class to agree and carry on genuine reforms that would improve governance and accountability and include equal justice for all, jobs and services while curbing corruption, as demanded by the Iraqi people, notably in Baghdad and southern Shiite provinces since last August, prompted the demonstrators to request reform of the whole Government and political process, abandoning the ethnic and sectarian quota approach that has been in the fundament of the Iraq political system since 2003.

In February a mix of civil-society protesters was joined by the supporters of Sayed Muqtada Al-Sadr. Spurred by that pressure, Prime Minister Al-Abadi attempted to accelerate the delivery of his reform programme and to replace the Cabinet created on the basis of party affiliation or ethnic or sectarian identity by a so-called technocratic Cabinet, requested, among others, by Al-Sadr. For the majority of Iraqi protesters, such a Cabinet is needed to enact genuine reforms, get rid of a powerful patronage system and achieve success in fighting corruption. However, the majority of Iraqi political blocs reject such a fundamental overhaul of the political process. They view such attempts as efforts to delegitimize not only the Government or the Council of Representatives, but the whole political system. Notably, they also view Al-Sadr's action as an attempt to take over the power on the back of the Shiite street.

Following months of controversy and weeks of political paralysis and split in the Council of Representatives, the promise of a solution to the political deadlock came with some new ministerial appointments at the parliamentary meeting of 26 April. Yet that hope suffered a significant setback on 30 April. Once it was clear that voting would not take place on another set of ministerial candidates, Sadrist and civil-society demonstrators breached the entry checkpoints of the Green Zone and stormed the Parliament building. Acts of vandalism and attacks on some members of Parliament, sadly, broke with the practice of many months of peaceful protests. The protesters withdrew from the Green Zone the following day, yet they pledged further action in series of escalating steps — the dismissal of the three constitutional leaders of the country, early elections culminating, if necessary, with attacks on the seat of power, civil disobedience or a general strike — unless the Government and Parliament made rapid progress on reforms. At this stage, although

the situation has calmed down, it remains unpredictable and could unfold in many different directions.

Since the beginning of the pro-reform protest movement in August 2015, the Shiite religious leadership, the Marja'iya, has backed the people's requests for political solutions to the current deep political crisis, as well as for progressive reforms in Iraq, including through the most recent statement by the Office of Grand Ayatollah Ali Al-Sistani on 4 May. In it, the Marja'iya renewed its warning to the parties against a continuation of the current course in dealing with the country's issues and its many crises and called on them to think of the future of their people and take serious and tangible steps to resolve the current situation.

I strongly urge the Government, constitutional and political leaders and civil society to work together in a constructive dialogue that will not only resolve the political impasse, but give a clear perspective of better a future for the people, which will unite them and their leaders. Maintaining focus and unity of effort in fighting the so-called Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) remains a critical priority, followed by mobilizing international assistance to help alleviate a deep economic, fiscal and humanitarian crisis, and promote stabilization and the return of internally displaced persons (IDP). A business-as-usual approach simply will not be enough for the people. They want genuine change that will improve their lives.

It is imperative to resume soon the work of the Council of Representatives and to confirm a Government that will be able and willing to promote genuine reforms. Iraq's political groups must together find a political solution based on the Constitution, the law and the principles of democracy, in order to respond to the needs of the people, put an end to the split and paralysis in Parliament and enable the rapid enactment of the necessary reforms and anti-corruption measures, and the smooth functioning of State institutions, without threat or intimidation. I also call on the Government to take specific steps to promote women's participation in politics as part of the reform process.

Despite the notable and consistent progress on the ground against ISIL, it remains a formidable and determined enemy that constantly adjusts its tactics and attack patterns, while also taking into account of developments in Syria. As the Secretary-General has advised the Council on numerous occasions, ISIL

cannot be defeated by military means alone. Without addressing the root causes of violent extremism and the underlying ideology, efforts will not be sustainable or lasting. Military victories need to be complemented by support for displaced people and increased stabilization and rehabilitation efforts that prioritize the rule of law and good governance and allow for the safe return of IDPs to their places of origin. Simultaneously, Iraqis must prioritize political and community reconciliation.

The recent resumption of contacts and dialogue between Baghdad and Erbil should be turned into a genuine partnership of mutually beneficial cooperation. Reconciling differences and working together on the necessary reforms will create the conditions for enhanced financial and technical support by the international community to Iraq, including the Kurdistan region.

The visit of the Secretary-General to Iraq on 26 March, accompanied by Mr. Jim Yong Kim, President of the World Bank Group, and Mr. Ahmad Mohamed Ali Al-Madani, President of the Islamic Development Bank, was an illustration of the seriousness of the international community in its support for Iraq. The world must recognize that Iraq requires more, not less, international support at this critical juncture as it struggles with many challenges and to break from past legacies of poor governance and corruption. While the international community is ready to offer more support, Iraqis themselves must implement reforms that will put their country on the road to recovery.

I welcome the progress achieved during Iraq's negotiations with the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, which should be finalized during another round of negotiations in Amman in mid-May. Positive results will also be needed in order to promote Iraq's case at the forthcoming Group of Seven Summit in Japan.

Stabilizing newly liberated areas remains a priority, and is key to laying the groundwork for future reconciliation. The problems are immense, as shown by the example of Ramadi, with the huge challenges that are posed by the vast degree of destruction and unprecedented contamination by explosive devices. Despite the Government's warnings about the threat of improvised explosive devices (IEDs), thousands of desperate families have already returned to the city of Ramadi and its surrounding areas. We are very concerned about reports of dozens of civilian casualties

from booby-trap IEDs placed by ISIL, as well as remnant explosive devices. In close collaboration with, and under the guidance of, the national and provincial authorities on mine action, the United Nations Mine Action Service has played a role in helping to mobilize international capacities to address explosive remnants of war, including IEDs, at the local level.

I am concerned about the reports of ISIL's use of weaponized chemicals in its attacks on civilians and security force personnel, as has been happening recently in Bashir, Taza and Matar. I urge the international community to support the ongoing investigation into those incidents by the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons and to ensure accountability for anyone found to be involved in, or facilitating the use of, weaponized chemicals.

The humanitarian crisis in Iraq remains one of the worst in the world. The number of Iraqis in need has doubled over the past year. Nearly one third of the population, more than 10 million people, now require some form of humanitarian assistance. Depending on its scope and intensity, the military campaign will almost certainly lead to mass displacement in the months ahead. In a worst-case scenario, another more than 2 million Iraqis may be newly displaced by the end of the year. The United Nations is especially worried about humanitarian conditions in Fallujah, which remains under ISIL's control and effectively under siege. The Government is bringing to safety families that manage to reach mustering points. The humanitarian community has been mobilized to provide lifesaving support to them and to the people trapped in Fallujah.

The 2016 humanitarian response plan requests \$861 million to provide lifesaving assistance to 7 million Iraqis. Disappointingly, only a quarter of that has been secured so far. Unless \$300 million is received by June, dozens of front-line lifesaving programmes will be cut back or closed. The priority humanitarian plan for this year is intended to cover existing needs in the country. It does not include the additional needs included in the contingency plans for Mosul's liberation. The amount required to help those who will be affected by the military operation in Mosul will depend directly on the type of the operation. If destruction is widespread and there is mass displacement for a long period, the cost of supporting the populations will be enormous. We also need to step up human resources and funding to address the immense needs of displaced women and

girls, which include specialized psychological care and education.

I would now like to turn to the tenth report (S/2016/372) of the Secretary-General on the issue of missing Kuwaiti and third-country nationals and missing Kuwaiti property, including the national archives. Iraq's Ministry of Defence has officially taken over the technical overview of the missing Kuwaiti persons file, resuming the work and undertaking a number of activities since the transition. That is an encouraging and welcome step, which I hope will add impetus to the Government of Iraq's efforts. Unfortunately, a stalemate still persists with respect to missing Kuwaiti property. In a follow-up to his visit, the Secretary-General and I visited Kuwait at the end of March, encouraging the Iraqi leadership to take every possible step to achieve tangible progress concerning the issues of both missing persons and property. In order to contribute more actively to that effort, the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq will be reaching out to various stakeholders to seek their assistance with various aspects that will help to push the process forward.

However, I would like to emphasize that the main responsibility for ensuring progress lies with the Government of Iraq. While we remain cognizant of the sheer volume of challenges that Iraq is currently facing, its international obligations have to be fulfilled and that issue cannot fall by the wayside.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): I thank Mr. Kubiš for his briefing.

I now give the floor to the representative of Iraq.

Mr. Albakim (Iraq) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, I would like to congratulate the Arab Republic of Egypt on its assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for this month, and for its especially transparent efforts in organizing the Council's work. I would also like to thank you personally, Mr. President. And I thank the People's Republic of China for its leadership of the Council last month. I am also grateful to Mr. Ján Kubiš, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI), for his briefing, and commend him and his teams in both Baghdad and New York for the outstanding service they are providing to Iraq at a difficult time.

The three leaderships — the presidency, the Speaker of Parliament and the Prime Minister — are working with the major political blocs elected by the people to implement the Prime Minister's reform programme and enact legislation in the House of Representatives, including on Government reform, the provision of public services and the return of internally displaced persons (IDPs) to liberated towns, with the assistance of the United Nations and donor States, which I would like to thank.

I would like to stress that 2016 is a crucial year for Iraq, with regard to combating terrorism and recovering all the territory that has been taken over by the terrorist gangs of the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL). Iraq urges the international coalition to build on the victories that have been achieved to date in military operations and to take advantage of the weakening of the ISIL groups in order to liberate Mosul. Operations to regain control of Mosul under joint military command are in their early stages, beginning with efforts to take over surrounding villages. My Government commends the Iraqi army for the successes in Ramadi that have enabled us to retake Ramadi and Hit and continue working to clean up remaining pockets in Anbar, paving the way for IDPs to return.

Our forces are working hard to regain the cities and towns occupied by ISIL's terrorist gangs in Iraq and to reopen the road between Baghdad and Amman. In that regard, we welcome the fact that United States Secretary of State John Kerry has said that he considers ISIL's actions in Iraq to be acts of genocide and crimes against humanity, particularly those against minorities such as Yazidis, Christians and Shiite Muslims. We urge the Security Council to set up a specific international legal mechanism for investigating and bringing to justice the criminals of ISIL. We urge all States to implement the provisions of resolutions 2170 (2014), 2178 (2014), 2199 (2015) and 2253 (2015), in particular the those pertaining to stopping the flow of foreign terrorist fighters from more than 100 States Members of the United Nations. We also urge them to eliminate the sources of financing and put an end to the smuggling of Iraqi oil and archaeological artefacts across the Turkish border.

The war against terrorism must be based on the principle of respect for all States, especially neighbouring States, and respect for the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of Iraq and the non-intervention in its internal affairs. We stress the Security Council's

responsibility to demand that Turkey withdraw its forces, which have penetrated 110 kilometres into Iraqi territory without prior authorization from the central Iraqi Government. We consider that a flagrant violation of Iraqi sovereignty. It is also a violation of the principle of good neighbourliness and other principles of international law, as well as the Charter of the United Nations. It undermines confidence in the Security Council's role in safeguarding the principles of the Charter. Furthermore, Iraq calls on the Turkish Government to urgently withdraw its forces from Iraqi territory. We urge it to respect international law and not to base its actions on utterly unfounded pretexts.

Iraq values the positions taken by the international coalition and its participation in the efforts to regain stability and rebuild the areas recovered by Iraqi forces from the ISIL terrorist gangs. The objective is to lessen the humanitarian crisis of IDPs. It requires overcoming the dangers posed by the remnants of explosives and mines left behind by those gangs. It also requires the provision of fundamental services that are essential for the return of IDPs to those towns and regions. I would underline the effective participation by the coalition to rebuild recovered areas and to ensure that locals are able to fight and hold territory.

We thank all States participating in the international coalition, in particular the United States of America and the member States of the European Union, as well as other States outside the coalition, for their efforts in confronting terrorism and for their military and logistical assistance to Iraqi security forces, all while respecting the sovereignty and sanctity of the Iraqi territory and coordinating with our security forces. We call for further support and cooperation and coordination at the operational level. We also call for air support, the building of better capacities and the provision of military equipment required by Iraq, in particular for de-mining. We call for the exchange of information, for intelligence support and for help to develop the military capacities of our security forces.

Iraq has always been, and will remain, an important fundamental partner of the international coalition until the terrorist gangs are thrown out by Iraq and eliminated. We recognize the threat of terrorism, the need to work and coordinate and cooperate to combat such gangs in all places. We will not forget the role of friendly countries that have stood alongside us in our time of need and in our war against international terrorism.

With regard to the efforts of the Iraqi Government to promote the efforts aimed at national reconciliation, the Government has adopted a series of legislation in implementation of its national programmes, including the law on accountability and justice and the adoption of the draft law on general amnesty. The Government has also approved the national guard law, providing for the absorption of the fighters of the popular mobilization forces and the tribal members outside the Ministries of the Interior and Defence who all participated in defending Iraq and combating the terrorist ISIL gangs. The aim is to reintegrate them into the national guard in accordance with the matrix of the Iraqi armed forces.

The Iraqi Government is working to complete military and logistical requirements to retake the city of Fallujah from ISIL by opening safe corridors for the people of Fallujah towards Amiriyat, Habbaniyah and Subaihat. In order to shelter civilians who have been able to leave the city, camps have been set up with food, medical supplies and humanitarian assistance. However, ISIL is preventing people from leaving the city in order to use them as human shields, just as they did when we retook Ramadi. Let me tell the Council that our security forces have, and continue to, allow the entry of foodstuffs and medication to Fallujah. We have never prevented that.

With regard to the Mosul dam, the Iraqi Government has taken major precautionary measures by lowering the water level in the reservoir behind the dam to 307 metres. We have called on our citizens to exercise great caution and to remain a safe distance from the dam in case it collapses. We have contracted the Italian company Trevi to repair one of the floodgates and to train Iraqi personnel to use modern technologies. Our engineers are currently undertaking that work. In that regard, Iraq appreciates the efforts of the United States of America and Italy, which are both working hard with Iraq to find a lasting and final to the problem of the dam.

Iraq is making continuing efforts to strengthen its relations with Arab other States of the region. Allow me to mention in particular Kuwait, Jordan, Iran and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, as well as our constant contacts with the Syrian Government. It is essential to find a speedy solution to the Syrian question. We must put an end to the humanitarian crisis in order to avoid its escalation and to find a political settlement that is satisfactory to all parties and serves to safeguard the unity and territorial integrity of the Syrian State and

its international borders. That includes guarantees of non-intervention by neighbouring States and stopping the flow of terrorist fighters through Syrian borders. We appeal to the Security Council to sanction States that allow the mobilization of terrorist fighters on their land and who direct them to other States in a dirty war against humankind, stability and development. Iraq supports the United Nations and international efforts in finding a political solution that includes all Syrians, including Syria's Kurds.

The Government of Iraq is committed to making exceptional efforts aimed at achieving progress with regard to the issue of missing Kuwaiti nationals and to the national archives. The joint national committees are meeting witnesses in connection with the missing Kuwaiti and third-country nationals. On 21 March, they interviewed a witness with regard to suspected burial sites holding the remains of a number of missing Kuwaiti nationals in the Al-Jahrah and Al-Khamisiyah regions. The operation to collect and document all information is ongoing.

Let me stress how deep the relationship between Iraq and Kuwait runs. We value the support of the State of Kuwait, its Prince, its Amir and its people in our war against terrorism and in providing humanitarian assistance to Iraqi internally displaced persons. Today we enjoy exceptional bilateral relations. There are joint visits and meetings of joint committees, and we welcome the increasing number of Kuwaiti tourists to holy sites in Iraq. We are also working to increase investments between our countries.

Iraq is committed to providing protection to those in temporary transit camps. We urge States to repatriate their citizens from those camps. We would like to thank Ms. Lute for her efforts at finding durable solutions.

In conclusion, let me express our thanks and appreciation to Special Representative of the Secretary-General Kubiš and his team in providing advice to the Iraqi Government and for the daily efforts carried out daily by UNAMI, aimed at ensuring Iraq's unity and stability and that it is free of terrorism. We condemn the recent killing of a UNAMI staff member. In that connection, Iraqi authorities are carrying out an investigation in order to find those responsible for that murder and to bring them to justice.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): I shall now give the floor to those members of the Council who wish to make statements.

Mr. Churkin (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): The Security Council has been increasingly working in open formats, occasionally in breach of earlier agreed-upon formats. I wanted to speak at this public meeting today, which, as we know, is permitted under the rules of procedure.

We are grateful to Mr. Ján Kubiš for his briefing and for having presented the report (S/2016/396) of the Secretary-General. We welcome the efforts of the United Nations and, above all those of United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI). We are grateful to the Permanent Representative of Iraq for his substantive statement.

Iraq's tragedy has continued for 13 years, with significant consequences for the entire region. At this juncture, we note the need to overcome the internal political crisis as soon as possible. We understand the importance of reforming the system of State governance. However, what is most important in today's context is the task of achieving national reconciliation and joining efforts to overcome the country's problems. That can be achieved only through a broad national dialogue and agreements based on consensus among all the participants of the internal political process, while maintaining the unity and ethnic and confessional diversity of the country.

United efforts will enhance effectiveness in combating terrorist organizations. We fully support the fight of the Iraqi Government against the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL). We have noted successes. However, the rapid increase in terrorist activities, in particular in Baghdad, forces us to be concerned and to question the effectiveness of the actions of the coalition, which lately, for some reason, has been referring to itself as the global coalition. Yet the area in which terrorists are active continues to expand beyond the region — into Libya, Afghanistan and Europe. We are convinced that only a comprehensive approach in combating terrorism, while strictly adhering to international legal standards, can produce the desired results. There should be no double standards. We need a consistent and principled position on the part of all members of the international community to combat this absolute evil.

We are particularly concerned about reports of ISIL using weaponized chemical agents, which the report mentions. One of those cases was reported to the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons.

Unfortunately, nothing is said about investigating such cases. Weaponized chemical agents are spreading throughout the region and are being used by terrorists. Some Member States continue to pretend that that is not happening and blame the Al-Assad regime for everything. Yet analyses of the primary chemical components of weapons seized from insurgents in Tikrit, with the subsequent identification of producers and terms of sales to other countries, show that they were in fact manufactured in Turkey or supplied to that country without the right of re-export.

In that context, our initiative on developing an international convention to combat chemical terrorism is becoming increasingly timely. They same can be said in connection with the Russian and Chinese draft resolution. We are in favour of strict respect for Iraqi sovereignty, which is regularly violated by Turkey through air strikes. Those can lead to the death of civilians, as noted in the report. Under the pretence of combating terrorists, Turkey continues to maintain a presence in the Bashiqa camp, and the protests from Baghdad are simply disregarded.

The humanitarian situation in the country is a cause for concern, in which the number of people requiring assistance is now more than in Syria. At the same time, however, the main problems with regard to humanitarian access are located in areas under the influence of terrorist organizations. The report states,

"[h]undreds of thousands of people are ... in desperate need of assistance, with little or no opportunity to exit. Thousands of families are already caught between the front lines of opposing forces [,] and many more are likely to become so in the coming months." (S/2016/396, para. 54)

A catastrophic situation can be seen in Fallujah. Over the course of the so-called liberation, Ramadi was first blocked and then practically destroyed by air strikes.

Together with you, Sir, and other colleagues from Security Council — just recently during a working lunch with the President of the International Committee of the Red Cross — we discussed the fact that we are not all attaching equal importance to different situations. Some situations receive more attention than others. That is probably for political reasons. For example, every day and week, we discuss the humanitarian situation in Syria, whereas in Iraq, which is also combating a terrorist threat, the humanitarian situation is rarely the focus of our attention. That needs to be rectified, and

we should invite Mr. O'Brien to examine the situation very carefully.

In conclusion, I would like to express my wish for the people of Iraq overcome this long-running crisis as soon as possible.

Ms. Sison (United States of America): I thank Special Representative Organization of the Secretary-General Kubiš him for his briefing and want to commend him and his team for all of their efforts and operating under such difficult circumstances. I also thank the Ambassador of Iraq for his briefing this morning.

I wanted to comment on just one aspect of the intervention made by the Russian delegation. Of course, we all recognize that the terrorism of the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) remains a determined and pernicious enemy in Iraq. Nearly every day, we hear of ISIL bombings in civilian areas, resulting in high numbers of casualties. The United States is a committed partner of the Iraqi Government, of the Iraqi people and, indeed, of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq. Vice-President Biden strongly reaffirmed his own commitment during his recent visit to Iraq last week.

We are encouraged by the recent military progress in Anbar with the liberation of Hit and the breaking of the siege of Haditha.

But I want to note that it is important that we work together as a Council on a consensus-based approach. We welcome cooperation among Council members so that we can look for a constructive way to orient our work. For example, we worked together on the chemical weapons portfolio in Syria, adopting a number of very important resolutions — resolutions 2118 (2013), 2209 (2015) and 2235 (2015). We regard that success as the result of our joint productive work at the Council. I think those resolutions have removed significant amount of chemicals weapons. The resolutions condemned the use of chlorine gas as a weapon and established the Joint Investigative Mechanism. We want to keep the Mechanism focused on the use of chemical weapons by any actors in Syria.

As we look at the challenges posed by terrorism in Iraq, including the use of any such weapons by any actors, we want to look towards a constructive way of focusing on a consensus-based approach.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): I shall now make a statement in my capacity as the representative of Egypt.

At the outset, I would like to thank Mr. Ján Kubiš for his useful briefing.

Egypt would like to express its concern about the recent political developments in Iraq, in particular in view of the difficult security situation prevailing in that fraternal country. Egypt appeals to all political blocs in the Iraqi House of Representatives to respect and safeguard national institutions of the State, to unify its national vision and make every possible effort to overcome the current crisis, which could lead to a political vacuum, the repercussions of which will be felt by all groups in Iraqi society.

Egypt emphasizes the importance of supporting the three leaderships and agreeing on a comprehensive political reform programme, including, inter alia, ending the quota system and fighting corruption. The Security Council and the international community must support every effort to strengthen the concept of a national State.

We would also like to express our firm position on safeguarding the unity and sovereignty of Iraq over its national territory. We stress the pivotal importance of the Arab character of Iraqi society, but also of the need to preserve its ethnic, sectarian and confessional character. That identity is the unifying element for all the Iraqi people. It constitutes a safety valve to prevent the Iraqi people from falling into the abyss of separatism and division — sectarian trends that some forces in the region are trying to foment.

Egypt would like to stress the importance of ending the flagrant incursions by Turkish forces into Iraq. I note Iraq's failure to date to heed regional and international calls to withdraw Turkish forces from Iraq. In that regard, Egypt calls on the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq to follow-up once again on the withdrawal of the Turkish forces from Iraqi territory. We would also like to stress the importance of Iran's refraining from interfering in the internal affairs of Iraq by encouraging trends that would threaten the unity of the Iraqi society.

We welcome the victories achieved by the Iraqi army in the past few months by liberating many areas and removing them from the authority of the Islamic State of Iraq and the Sham. We stress the importance of

developing a comprehensive vision to achieve stability, an approach that is not limited to the security and military aspects but also includes national reconciliation, the integration of Sunnis and reconstruction.

We emphasize the importance of concerted efforts by the international community to assist Iraq in demining activities, including when it comes to explosive remnants preventing the return of displaced persons to Ramadi and other liberated areas. The Egyptian Ministry of Defence has already approved a training programme for Iraqi forces in that regard.

Egypt has also provided the Government of Kurdistan, Iraq, with humanitarian assistance for displaced persons. Egypt underscores the importance of the humanitarian aspect of the Iraqi situation, which

includes finding missing Iraqi prisoners of war and returning Kuwaiti property, including the national archives, which have been the subject of many United Nations resolutions. Those issues have also been the subject of the requisite importance in numerous statements of the Security Council. Egypt believes that it is important that the Council continue to shed light on those matters, in view of their humanitarian and legal ramifications.

I now resume my functions as President of the Council.

I now invite Council members to informal consultations to continue our discussion on the subject.

The meeting rose at 11 a.m.